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General Assembly

Fifty-seventh session

Official Records

54th plenary meeting
Wednesday, 20 November 2002, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Kavan ..... (Czech Republic)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Nguyen Thanh Chau, (Viet Nam), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 22 (*continued*)

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations

(a) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/122)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.18)

(b) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/87)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.11)

(c) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Caribbean Community

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/254)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.26)

(d) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/225)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.23)

(e) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of Central African States

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/266 and A/57/266/Add.1)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.25)

(f) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Cooperation Organization

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/119)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.22)

(g) Cooperation between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/358)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.29)

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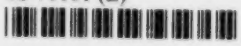

(h) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/375)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.38)

(i) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Latin American Economic System

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/128)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.24)

(j) Cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/386)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.32)

(k) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (A/57/576)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.31)

(l) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/217)

(m) Cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/351)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.39)

(n) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of American States

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/267)

(o) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/405)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.28)

(p) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/475)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.21)

(q) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission (A/57/255)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.40)

(r) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Southern African Development Community

Report of the Secretary-General(A/57/94, A/57/94/Add.1)

Draft resolution (A/57/L.30)

(s) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Association of South-East Asian Nations

Draft resolution (A/57/L.16)

Mr. Fadaifard (Islamic Republic of Iran): I should like at the outset to convey my delegation's appreciation to the Secretary-General for all his comprehensive and informative reports under agenda item 22, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations". All those reports certainly deserve great attention and merit extensive review by this body. In the meantime, I would like to take this opportunity to focus on three reports of the Secretary-General, namely, those relating to cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the Economic Cooperation Organization and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization.

The report entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference", contained in document A/57/405, demonstrates that the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) have been working in close cooperation on wide-ranging issues in their common search for solutions to global problems, including questions relating to international peace and security, disarmament, self-determination, decolonization, fundamental human rights and economic and social development.

The Charter of the United Nations encourages activities through regional cooperation for the promotion of the purposes and principles of the United Nations. My delegation therefore believes that deepening relations between the two organizations through high-level contacts, regular consultations and technical meetings could contribute to the fulfilment of the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Fortunately, in recent years new avenues for better and strengthened cooperation between the OIC and the United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies have been explored. Significant progress in this field has been made in the widespread cooperation between the OIC and its subsidiary bodies and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. The two organizations continued to refine their joint cooperation to better reflect and respond to the priorities of their member States — which are also the priorities agreed upon in the general meetings between the United Nations and the OIC — such as education, the eradication of illiteracy, the development of science and technology, human resource development and the environment.

My delegation also hopes that the United Nations and other organizations of the United Nations system, particularly the lead agencies, provide increased technical and other forms of assistance to the OIC and its subsidiary organs and specialized and affiliated institutions in order to enhance cooperation.

In view of the future cooperation between the United Nations and the OIC, I believe that combating Islamophobia is one area with regard to which both organizations could consider taking joint action. There should be no doubt that the bigoted and defamatory remarks against Islam that are sometimes widely broadcast by the far-reaching media of the United States hurt 1.2 billion Muslims everywhere and have an adverse impact on them across the globe, thus harming the quest for furthering understanding within the international community. At a time when the United Nations is at the forefront of efforts aimed at enhancing peace and harmony among nations and followers of different faiths in the world, we believe that we need to look into such Islamophobia and see what the United Nations, in association with the OIC, can do to thwart it.

Given the fact that there already exist areas of suspicion and disagreement between the West and the Islamic world, we are concerned that the recent surge in bigotry against Islam amounts to adding fuel to the fire and exacerbates the situation. While those who indulge in damaging rhetoric are acting irresponsibly, we can still be optimistic about Member States appreciating the importance of the issue and uniting to check the growth of this tendency.

Cooperation between the United Nations and the OIC may provide for some activities, including awareness-raising, encouraging Member States to take actions and alerting the media to the adverse impact of Islamophobia on peace and harmony at the international level. Inasmuch as misinformation and misperceptions reside at the origin of the problem, access through United Nations channels, in which the OIC should actively participate, may have an important effect.

Cooperation and joint programmes and projects between the United Nations system and the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) should be promoted and encouraged, particularly between ECO and bodies such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the International Telecommunication Union, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). UNDP should be more involved in the area of capacity-building with the ECO secretariat and its relevant programmes. Cooperation with UNCTAD in the areas of transit transport, regional investment and trade efficiency is expected to progress further since there are ample opportunities to strengthen that type of cooperation.

ESCAP, as the main regional commission dealing with our region, continued to be very active individually and in cooperation and collaboration with other bodies within the United Nations system and other development and financial institutions in the ECO region. There are still enormous opportunities for expanding such cooperation between ESCAP and ECO, and it should be extended to new areas, including the area of social environment. The Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), another United Nations regional commission, can also play a similar role, particularly in assisting the Central Asian members of ECO.

My delegation welcomes the new phase of cooperation between UNDCP AND ECO for coordinating the control of illicit drugs, cooperation of UNFPA with ECO in addressing HIV/AIDS and adolescent health, and FAO collaboration with ECO in developing the agricultural sector and food security. We are quite confident that new fields of cooperation can be explored jointly and can be operationalized with other agencies, such as the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Development Fund for Women, by addressing the social aspects of combating narcotic drugs, particularly their main victims — women and children. The United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization and the World Tourism Organization should also become more active with ECO in the area of cultural development and tourism.

Furthermore, the region also continues to be afflicted by the problem of the illicit cultivation, production, trafficking and consumption of narcotic drugs, whose serious adverse impact on the social, economic and security infrastructure of the regional countries is well known to the international community. There should be a comprehensive strategy at various levels to address this major socio-economic challenge to the region. Strengthening economic performance, the expansion of trade and investment, as well as poverty eradication in the region, are the major components of such a strategy.

Undoubtedly, the reconstruction of Afghanistan, especially reviving its economy through international assistance and regional cooperation, can contribute enormously to the success of that strategy. While addressing that issue, let me add that the reconstruction of Afghanistan is one of the major priorities of the ECO member States. ECO is establishing trilateral cooperation with third countries as the most viable and cost effective option for expanding economic and trade cooperation between Afghanistan and neighbouring countries, which is vital to reviving its economy.

Finally, I would like to make some comments on the report entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization", contained in document A/57/122. As the report illustrates, the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO) continues to carry out systematic and consistent analyses of the agenda items of the Sixth Committee and the International Law Commission from Asian and African perspectives.

Commentaries and recommendations of this organization remain a source of inspiration for its member States in their deliberations on issues before the General Assembly and continue to be reflected directly or indirectly in the proceedings of the legal organs of the United Nations. The wide range of topics on the AALCO agenda is indicative of that organization's resolve to positively contribute to collective efforts aimed at tackling the new challenges of the international community. AALCO closely monitors legal developments relating to international economic cooperation for development and continues to keep that issue on its agenda.

The question of refugees — a topic on which the organization has done a lot of work — trade law matters, crime prevention and combating corruption have also been the subject of study and deliberation by the organization. Cooperation between the United Nations and AALCO has proved to be fruitful and has served the mutual interests of the two organizations. That collaboration has been developed further in recent years and is being carried out in several forums, covering various subjects of great importance to the international community as a whole. We feel that prospects for future cooperation between the United Nations and AALCO are promising.

Ms. Løj (Denmark): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries, Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, as well as the European Free Trade Association country member of the European Economic Area, Iceland, align themselves with this statement.

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations is in many ways an important issue. Let me begin by mentioning a few of the reasons that underline the importance of the issue. First, regional and other international organizations are often being called upon to provide expert assistance and advice to complement the efforts of the United Nations. Secondly, effective cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations can lead to increased cost-efficiency, broader outreach and legitimacy, while simultaneously minimizing the danger of duplication. Needless to say, the European Union is therefore very supportive of efforts aimed at broadening and deepening well-functioning cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations. The European Union commends the Secretary-General for the reports that have been presented on this subject. They provide a clear and informative overview, and form an excellent basis for our debate today.

The European Union remains very supportive of the chosen approach of conducting a single joint debate on all the agenda items concerning cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations. Allow me to discuss a few aspects of this debate that the European Union considers to be of particular importance.

The European Union warmly welcomes the establishment of the new African Union at its Summit in Durban in July. The European Union considers the African Union as the central organization for the regional integration of the African continent. The creation of the African Union is a landmark event that could give Africa a new start. The European Union particularly welcomes the strong emphasis on the links among peace, stability, good governance and development that is embedded in the African Union. In that context, the European Union fully supports the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as an Africa-owned and Africa-led initiative. The European Union considers that NEPAD provides an excellent basis for a new partnership between Africa and the international community. A central feature of NEPAD is that it recognizes an operational link between economic growth and development and the NEPAD principles of political and economic good governance, the rule of law, democratization and respect for human rights. NEPAD has the potential to pave the way for the new African Union and to give it real content.

The implementation of NEPAD can be fostered by enhanced regional cooperation. In that respect, the European Union attaches great importance to the dialogue between the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the European Union. The ministerial conference between SADC and the European Union held in Maputo from 7 to 8 November 2002 welcomed the formulation of the Regional Indicative Programme and the process of regional integration as the basis for future European Union support. Furthermore, the conference acknowledged that regional organizations play a special role in conflict-prevention, conflict-resolution and peacekeeping, and that this role should be reinforced.

As an active participant in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the European Union attaches great significance to the implementation of the Platform for Cooperative Security. It underlines the importance of cooperation between the OSCE and other international organizations on the basis of their comparative advantages. The heart of the OSCE is its comprehensive concept of security, covering the political-military dimension, the economic and environmental dimension, and the human rights dimension. The OSCE is promoting security, democracy and human rights in all three dimensions.

The fight against terrorism has been at the forefront of the cooperation between the OSCE and the United Nations. In adopting the Bucharest Plan of Action and the Bishkek Programme of Action last year, the OSCE underscored its resolve to contribute to the international anti-terrorism strategy led by the United Nations. A good example of such collaboration was the high-level meeting on terrorism held in Lisbon in June, where the United Nations and various international and regional organizations reaffirmed their commitment to the development of mutually reinforcing efforts. Such commitment is at the heart of the draft OSCE charter on preventing and combating terrorism, which is to be adopted at the forthcoming OSCE Ministerial Council in Porto.

When it comes to efforts at conflict prevention, crisis management and rehabilitation, the cooperation established between the OSCE field missions and the United Nations in the Balkans, Georgia and Tajikistan

remains successful. The European Union will continuously seek to foster coordination, cooperation and synergy among the OSCE, the United Nations and other international organizations working to promote security, stability, democracy and human rights in the OSCE region.

The European Union follows developments in Latin America very closely, and is concerned about the worsened economic situation in a number of countries, such as Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay and Brazil. The European Union supports the efforts made by those countries to overcome the economic crisis, and also stands firmly behind the regional integration processes in the Common Market of the South, the Andean Community and Central America, which, in spite of political and economic difficulties in the region, have demonstrated the region's commitment to the development of democratic societies.

The European Union also follows closely developments in South-East Asia, and is concerned about the various terrorist treats in the region and about the many unsolved internal conflicts that contribute to political instability. In the light of the recent bomb attack in Bali and the incidents in the Philippines, the European Union fully supports the efforts made in the region and within the framework of the Association of South-East Asian Nations to further develop regional cooperation.

The European Union is prepared to continue its active support for, and cooperation with, the Caribbean Community on the creation of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy and to implement the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

The European Union takes note of the positive cooperation between the United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum, and encourages the Secretary-General and the President of the Pacific Islands Forum to continue and strengthen cooperation in areas of mutual interest. Coordination and cooperation with the specialized agencies of the United Nations and with regional and other organizations should also be promoted.

The United Nations and the Council of Europe are complementary in their endeavours to protect and strengthen democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms and the rule of law. In recent years, the United Nations and the Council of Europe have worked together closely on several missions and in the organization of United Nations special sessions and international conferences. In the wake of the attacks of 11 September 2001, the two organizations have increased their mutual cooperation in the international fight against terrorism. The States members of the European Union confirm their full support for the European Court of Human Rights and for the system of human rights protection in Europe, of which the Court is a central component.

The European Union attaches great importance to cooperation between the United Nations and national parliaments through the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), and it commends the two organizations for their efforts to develop appropriate cooperation procedures, including the invitation to the IPU to participate as an observer in the work of the General Assembly. It welcomes the initiatives taken by the two organizations to allow parliaments to contribute to major events organized by the United Nations. The European Union firmly believes that national parliaments, working through the IPU, can play a positive role in terms of complementing and supporting the work of the United Nations.

The European Union notes with satisfaction that cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference has been further developed during the past year. The periodic high-level meetings between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference are important to maintaining continuity in deepening the dialogue between the two organizations.

Enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States is also of importance to the European Union. The Union is therefore pleased to note that the two organizations have established close contacts on a number of issues in a diverse array of fields, including politics, economics and culture.

The European Union is pleased to note that cooperation between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie has continued to expand over the past year. The cooperation covers many issues of common interest, not least in the fields of democracy, good governance and human rights.

The European Union is pleased to note the continuing cooperation between the United Nations and

the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization. That body has continued to give firm support to United Nations efforts, in particular in the field of international security, arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament. The European Union believes that the two organizations support and complement each other in their work for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

The European Union has always attached great importance to the activities of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, particularly given the risk that such weapons might fall into the hands of terrorists. The European Union therefore strongly encourages the further development of cooperation and collaboration with the United Nations Secretariat in this field.

Let me conclude by emphasizing that enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other international organizations in many ways has the potential to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the organizations involved and at the same time to prevent the risk of duplication. The existing inter-institutional dialogue should therefore be continued and intensified, so as to strengthen the spirit of cooperation and coordination. The European Union strongly encourages the United Nations to continue its efforts to enhance cooperation with regional and other international organizations.

Mr. Cheah (Malaysia): My delegation is pleased to participate in the debate on agenda item 22, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations". We attach particular importance to this debate because we realize the importance of consolidating the global efforts of the United Nations with those of regional and other intergovernmental organizations. We believe that there is an increasing need to enhance interaction and cooperation between the United Nations and these organizations in order for their respective efforts to be effective and mutually complementary.

In its statement on this item, my delegation will focus on cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the African Union (AU).

My delegation notes with satisfaction the cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union. That cooperation, which began in 1947, was strengthened with the signing of the cooperation agreement between the United Nations and the IPU in 1996. The Secretary-General's report, contained in document A/57/375, has comprehensively detailed the various initiatives undertaken by both organizations in the areas of peace and security, economic and social development, issues related to children and women, international law, human rights, democracy, drug trafficking, transnational organized crime and terrorism.

It is indeed appropriate for the General Assembly to acknowledge the contribution of the IPU to the work of the Assembly and also important for the IPU to be allowed to participate in the work and activities of the General Assembly and its subsidiary bodies. In that regard, my delegation welcomes the granting by the General Assembly of observer status to the IPU yesterday. This will enable it to have a more meaningful, productive and significant relationship with the United Nations.

With regard to cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, my delegation would first of all like to thank the Secretary-General for his report, contained in document A/57/405. We warmly welcome the continued strengthening of relations between the United Nations and the OIC through high-level contacts, regular consultations and technical meetings. We are particularly pleased with the general meeting on cooperation between representatives of the United Nations system and of the OIC and its specialized institutions held in Vienna from 9 to 11 July 2002, providing for extensive exchanges in areas of common concern to both organizations. We welcome the identification of 10 agreed priority areas of cooperation and concur with the view that as cooperation expands new areas of interaction might be considered without prejudice to our priorities.

My delegation is delighted to note that the OIC has already participated in United Nations meetings and that, likewise, the United Nations has participated in OIC meetings. We believe that this denotes the positive role of both organizations and their high regard for each other as partners in the common search for solutions to global problems. In that regard, Malaysia looks forward to the participation of the United Nations at the tenth OIC Summit, to be held in Kuala Lampur in October 2003.

We recognize that since the OIC became an observer to the United Nations in 1975 important progress has been made in the cooperation between the two organizations in the political, economic and social areas. In fact, the OIC, including its subsidiary bodies, has entered into cooperation agreements with 13 United Nations specialized agencies, programmes and funds.

We look forward to the conclusion of the memorandum of understanding between the World Food Programme and the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, which will formalize and enhance relations between them and will pave the way for joint action in the field of education.

We are pleased that numerous joint initiatives are being undertaken and that more OIC countries are benefiting from them. Therefore, in its firm support for cooperation between the United Nations and the OIC, Malaysia confirms its full endorsement of draft resolution A/57/L.28, which was introduced by the representative of the Sudan.

My delegation associates itself fully with the statement by the Permanent Representative of Cambodia on behalf of ASEAN this morning. The United Nations and ASEAN have been and, I am confident, will continue to be important development partners in the years to come. Several United Nations agencies have provided strong support to ASEAN countries in diverse areas of, inter alia, poverty eradication, good governance, disaster prevention, the environment and the role of women in society.

In this regard, the role of the United Nations Development Programme and its long-standing relationship with ASEAN stands out and needs no elaboration. In the communiqué issued after the thirty-fifth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, held in Brunei Darussalam in July 2002, ASEAN Foreign Ministers affirmed the need for enhancing the organization's cooperation with the United Nations, as such cooperation will contribute to ASEAN's objectives of economic growth, sustainable development, social progress, cultural development and the promotion of peace and stability. Enhanced cooperation between ASEAN and the United Nations is indeed laudable and achievable, and will certainly be of immense benefit to both organizations.

My delegation is also supportive of forging close cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations as a further development of the close and productive cooperation between the former Organization of African Unity and the world body. The draft resolution before the Assembly in document A/57/L.39 seeks to enhance and intensify that relationship and to bring to it a higher level of cooperation encompassing many areas, including trade and economic development, human rights, good governance and the strengthening of democratic institutions, in addition to the promotion of peace and security on the continent.

Given the special needs of Africa and the heavy involvement of the United Nations in African-related issues, it is only appropriate for the African Union to build on the solid relationship that has been established between the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the United Nations, particularly in the context of Africa's ambitious New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), which will require a high level of international support.

In conclusion, my delegation hopes that the draft resolutions on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations will receive the full support of the Assembly. Malaysia is convinced that the United Nations can only benefit from close cooperation with those organizations. Indeed, the forging of cooperation between so many regional and other organizations and the United Nations attests to the importance and centrality of the United Nations as the pre-eminent and most universal international Organization. It is also a manifestation of the abiding faith of the international community in multilateralism and in the United Nations at the centre of the process.

Mr. Baali (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): The item that we are considering today, on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations, gives us an overview of the interaction that can exist between the United Nations and those organizations and of the potential for synergy in such cooperation, which, engaged in wisely, can reconcile the need to respect regional and local characteristics with the action of the international community, something that is no less necessary in assisting various areas than in acquiring the support that it needs.

In that context, I should like to address agenda item 22 (m), on cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union, which has assumed a special character this year because of the transformation of the Organization of African Unity

(OAU) into the African Union (AU) and the launching of NEPAD. The international community's welcoming of those major initiatives — confirmed by the General Assembly on 16 September with regard to the support of the United Nations system for NEPAD — calls for cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union, taking into account the dynamic of institutional transformation. My delegation cannot fail to support the earlier position of the OAU with respect to considering a programme of cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU for 2002, which believed that it would be more prudent to wait for the definition of the structures and functions of the new continental organization before proceeding with that exercise. We also think that today's debate can greatly contribute to the definition of terms for future cooperation between the two organizations.

The United Nations has the principal role with regard to strengthening the institutional capacities of the African Union and mobilizing international support for NEPAD's successful implementation. What is achieved on the African continent will depend greatly on that. Africa's economic and social development cannot be realized without stability, which promotes an environment of peace and security. That truth has been recognized by the principal organs of the United Nations — the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council — by the Secretary-General and by African countries themselves. We must work together with determination to put an end to all conflicts and tensions on the continent and to gather and mobilize energies for reconstruction and development.

The increasing and consistent participation of African contingents in peacekeeping missions is well demonstrated. That African commitment responds to the wishes of the Organization — particularly those of the Security Council — and points to the path towards truly fruitful cooperation in the future, particularly in the area of conflict prevention and settlement. In that regard, the recommendations of the Security Council ad hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, under the able chairmanship of Ambassador Koonjul of Mauritius, aim to strengthen that cooperation through dialogue. We welcome those recommendations, and we call for their effective implementation.

Interaction between the Organization and the OAU mechanism for conflict prevention, management and settlement is a reality that will be enhanced and further structured by the forthcoming establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. However, for that cooperation to attain all its objectives, we must ensure that it does not simply transfer to African countries the responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Under the terms of the Charter, that lies primarily with the United Nations, which has irreplaceable experience, precious human capacities and material resources that are difficult to acquire at the regional level.

Reading the report of the Secretary-General (A/57/351) — whom I should like to thank for his commitment to Africa — allows one to measure the extent of cooperation that already exists between the United Nations and the African Union in such varied areas as economic and social development, humanitarian action, conflict prevention and settlement and peacekeeping. In that regard, my delegation welcomes the United Nations Secretariat's expressed willingness to help the African Union to establish new structures of its own. My delegation attaches the greatest importance to the success of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) support project in planning the transition phase from the OAU to the AU, with its strategic objective of creating solid institutional capacities and a base of resources needed for the new organization.

Furthermore, my delegation would like to emphasize the exemplary quality of cooperation between the United Nations and the African organization in the area of decolonization, reflected in the joint elaboration of the United Nations Settlement Plan for Western Sahara, which was confirmed by the General Assembly, endorsed by the Security Council and accepted by the parties to the conflict. It envisages the organization of a referendum on self-determination for the Saharawi people. That cooperation must continue, with a view to the future decolonization of the African continent's last non-self-governing Territory.

In addition, my delegation would like to stress the difficulties that face cooperation in the humanitarian sector. As a result of conflicts and natural disasters, the number of refugees in Africa has reached a disturbing level. The absence of appropriate infrastructures to deal with the flow of refugees makes it difficult — and in some cases impossible — for the host country to cope with such a situation by itself. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees must

scrupulously discharge the mandate entrusted to it, treating all the refugees of the world — whatever their race or origin — on a strictly equal basis, because there are no first-class or second-class refugees. It must no longer concern itself with the political settlement of conflicts, which remains the exclusive domain of Member States and of competent agencies and organs of the United Nations.

In addition, we note that the problem of resources continues to be acute. In several cases, consolidated appeals have been launched in vain. Therefore, we should like to reiterate those appeals to the international community to provide adequate assistance to the African Union and to the Governments of African countries affected by the problems of refugees, repatriated persons and displaced persons.

Lastly, I would like to speak on the struggle against terrorism. The scourge of transnational terrorism poses a global threat, from which nobody is free.

My delegation would call for even greater cooperation between our two organizations, with a view to implementing the OAU Convention on the Prevention and the Combating of Terrorism. It now has a sufficient number of accessions for it to enter into force. Last September's conference in Algiers offered a new impetus in this respect.

Mr. Mobarak (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): Mr. President, I am pleased to convey to you and to Member States a tribute from the Egyptian parliamentarians, on whose behalf I speak. We fully believe in the importance of cooperation with the United Nations through the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). Cooperation between these two bodies is a major objective of the Egyptian Parliament, and we are doing our utmost to encourage this, as we had done during Egypt's presidency of the IPU, from 1995 to 1999.

We are very pleased that the IPU was unanimously accorded observer status by the United Nations. Given the shortening of distances between States, peoples and cultures caused by the effects of globalization, and the repercussions this has engendered on the internal and external policies of nations and their relations with one another, it is high time for national parliaments to extend their activities beyond their national borders, and not confine themselves to national policies and legislation. They should enter world politics to affect its course in a positive manner.

We are calling here for a strengthened role for world parliaments in global politics. States must, at the national level, live up to the commitments made by their Governments to international treaties and agreements. There is an increasing phenomenon at the national level whereby Governments free themselves from their international treaty obligations in less time than they took to negotiate them. That is due to the absence of internal supervision to monitor faithful compliance with such treaties.

One clear example of this relates to the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro and its final document, "Agenda 21". Developing countries attached great importance to Agenda 21, but there was no follow-up action to implement it. In fact, some countries had disengaged themselves to some extent from the international commitments they had entered into at that time. Proper parliamentary monitoring at the national levels should have compelled Governments to take such commitments more seriously.

Just a few months ago, we all attended the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development. A Final Document and Plan of Action was adopted there, reflecting international commitments on the environment and on sustainable development. We hope that those commitments will not meet the same fate as the commitments made at Rio de Janeiro We urge all parliaments in the world to closely monitor action taken to implement the final document from Johannesburg, as well as the results from Monterrey's International Conference on Financing for Development and other related action programmes on the issue of development.

The Egyptian delegation would like to underscore the suffering of Palestinian parliamentarians due to the closure imposed by the Israeli occupation forces. They are unable to discharge their duties as representatives of their people. They are not able to move about to meet with their constituents or attend the sessions of their parliament. Israel's policy aims at destroying Palestinian civil and national institutions, contrary to claims Israel makes that it is the only democracy in the region. True democracies do not occupy other peoples' territories by force or usurp their rights.

Israel has ignored the fact that Palestinians have legislative and executive bodies that have been elected

under international monitoring. Egypt calls on parliamentarians throughout the world to urge their Governments to come to the support of Palestinian parliamentarians, who are suffering because of the destruction of their civil and legislative institutions. Such an elected Palestinian legislature would be able to guide its people towards peace, stability and development.

Mr. Kolby (Norway): We place great value on the subject currently under discussion, "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations". Only through cooperation on matters of common interest can we realize the full potential and effectiveness of both the United Nations and regional and other organizations.

Let me express my delegation's continued satisfaction that we treat the topic of cooperation between the United Nations and other organizations as one agenda item. This gives us an opportunity to be more efficient and to have one debate. However, it also makes it difficult to comment on all the equally important sub-items on the agenda. This year I will, therefore, comment on cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union, the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU).

With the required number of ratifications of the new Charter, the Organization of African Unity became the African Union at the Durban Summit last summer. The interim chairperson, Amara Essy, and the South African chair now have the formidable challenge of making the African Union into a well-functioning organization.

The renewed vitality and the modernized focus and mandate of the African Union shows the commitment Africa attaches to the challenges of the twenty-first century. This is further underlined by the aspirations embedded in the launching of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The importance of strong and practical cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union should be stressed. The role of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and other United Nations agencies in enhancing the capacity of the African Union Commission to respond to the objectives and targets set will be important. As the African Union has adopted a broad range of objectives and measures to attain political and economic integration, the capacity of the Commission will be crucial. Strengthened cooperation between United Nations and the African Union should further enhance the high ambitions for conflict prevention and resolution, good governance and democracy of the African nations, as envisaged in NEPAD and the African Union Charter.

Increased participation of the African Union in the United Nations, its organs and its specialized agencies should make a valuable contribution to the work of the United Nations. Norway is encouraged by the strong commitment of the Secretary-General to further enhance such cooperation. The combined efforts of the two organizations in conflict prevention and the peace processes on the African continent should be further developed.

The effects of numerous ongoing conflicts on the African continent only exacerbate poverty and underdevelopment, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, drought and hunger. The conflicts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, the Sudan and Somalia are still unresolved and require the continued attention of joint United Nations and African Union efforts. The new NEPAD initiative envisages African leaders taking on the responsibility for peace and conflict prevention. The strong commitment of African leaders to peace, as evidenced recently in the Ivory Coast, makes the role of the United Nations a supportive one. The Durban Summit's strong emphasis on continued conflict prevention, management and resolution through the establishment of an African Security Council is encouraging. However, much remains to be done in order to have a fully operational set-up for this. Assistance from the United Nations and bilateral partners is still required. Norway will continue to support the mechanism and calls for United Nations technical assistance and a coordinated approach by non-African United Nations Member States to support the capacity of the African Union to handle African conflicts.

Cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and the African Union is especially important in preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peacekeeping operations. Regional efforts by the African Union to achieve stronger economic and political integration could help prevent further conflicts. The new African Union has set a very ambitious agenda. The United Nations should play an

important role in assisting the African Union to realize those ambitious objectives.

Cooperation between field missions is an important aspect of the relationship between the OSCE and the United Nations. A well-functioning division of labour has been established in many areas of conflict and instability in the OSCE region, notably in Kosovo, where the OSCE has the responsibility for institution-building and democratization within the framework of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

Following the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 and the war against terrorism in Afghanistan, cooperation in Central Asia is particularly important. The OSCE has offices in all five republics. A number of United Nations agencies, as well, have well-established programmes in those countries. We should therefore look for ways of enhancing coordination and identify areas where synergy can be achieved. Division of labour, based on the comparative advantages of the respective organizations, ensures that resources are used in a cost-effective way.

The OSCE will continue to be an essential partner for the United Nations in the years to come, working hand in hand with the United Nations in laying the foundation for economic and social development and easing the burden of the United Nations in conflict prevention and conflict management in the OSCE area.

Norway would like to emphasize the importance of strengthening parliamentary involvement in the important issues and processes taking place within the United Nations. Parliaments are at the core of every democracy over the world. It is the parliaments that decide whether international treaties or agreements should be ratified or not, and it is the parliaments that adopt or amend national laws to follow up those international instruments. And not to forget: it is the parliaments that make funds available — for development cooperation, for international organizations and processes and for the following-up of every new global initiative — through the budgets adopted in parliaments. Thus, it is only through cooperation involving the parliaments that the United Nations can fully succeed in reaching its goals and aspirations.

Therefore, Norway welcomes the Secretary-General's report (A/57/375), which clearly shows that the cooperation between the IPU and the United Nations has been developed even further since the last session of the General Assembly. The parliamentarians within the IPU have actively contributed their views and support in connection with a number of major United Nations events, such as the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the special session of the General Assembly on Children and the World Food Summit.

In the United Nations Millennium Declaration, Member States resolved "to strengthen further cooperation between the United Nations and national parliaments through their world organization, the Inter-Parliamentary Union." It is with great pleasure that Norway supports the adoption of the resolution of the General Assembly which invites the IPU to participate in the sessions and work of the General Assembly in the capacity of observer, and which also allows for the circulation of official IPU documents in the Assembly. This is a decision long overdue. Nevertheless, we are convinced that this decision is an important milestone in providing the United Nations with a parliamentary dimension. On the basis of the new and strengthened status of IPU and the cooperation agreement of 1996, we would like to urge both organizations to review the cooperation so far and to consider ways and means to deepen and broaden the programme of cooperation in the time to come.

Mr. Gupta (India): My delegation would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (A/57/122) on cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO).

International law is an indispensable instrument to shape a new world order. International law cannot acquire the sanctity and universality that are fundamental to its wider acceptance without adequately accommodating and reflecting the needs and aspirations of the Asian and African States. Over the years, we have witnessed the able participation and representation of Asian and African States in the work of the United Nations and its legislative forums. Their contribution to the development of the law of treaties and the law of the sea is memorable, thanks largely to the work of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization as a forum for coordinating and trying to develop common Asian and African negotiating positions.

Member countries continue to receive valuable assistance from AALCO to help them to prepare for and participate in a variety of international law meetings on the environment, trade and human rights. A number of declarations and draft principles prepared by AALCO on subjects like refugees, humanitarian law, extradition, mutual judicial assistance, migration and investment are also worthy of note. Its continued emphasis on the work of the International Law Commission, the law of the sea, terrorism, human rights, international trade, the environment and the evolving body of international criminal law will be of immense help to Member States. In addition to its annual meetings and the customary annual meetings of the legal advisers of Member States in New York, it has also been conducting specialized seminars and workshops on contemporary themes of international law. These meetings bring together the best available talent of Asia and Africa in international law. There is a need to intensify these interactions.

AALCO has an indispensable role to play in helping the Asian and African States to develop enlightened legal policies and positions and to play their proper part in shaping a just and equitable world order. Towards that end, it must reorganize its mandates, gather the necessary funds and build its infrastructure. Asian and African States must ensure the development of international law expertise through the establishment of specialized institutions of legal learning. The wider dissemination of developments in international law in an easily accessible form to various segments of the community is also essential. There should be regular interaction between academic and governmental experts in international law within countries and throughout the regions.

AALCO can contribute immensely to that process with training programmes, the organization of highly specialized and high-quality lectures from leading exponents of international law, institutional fellowship programmes at the university level and exchanges of scholars and experts on international law within the two continents. We welcome the establishment of the AALCO Centre for Research and Training, which is an important step towards achieving those objectives. It is understood that some of these activities can be pursued only if more funds are available. The clearance of arrears in contributions, as well as fund-raising through voluntary contributions, could help.

It is heartening to note that the new permanent home of AALCO is beginning to take shape in New Delhi. We hope that by next year the headquarters building, along with the residential complex for the Secretary General, should be ready to be occupied. The acquisition of a new home will give a new dimension to AALCO and greater depth to all its activities. We hope that AALCO will attract a much wider membership and begin to better equip its member States to deal with contemporary problems of international law. We have no doubt that a vigorous drive to increase the membership of AALCO will be undertaken under the leadership of Nigeria.

The Organization has become a recognized body of international law in the international community, as it is the only intergovernmental body of its kind with observer status in the United Nations. We hope that the cooperation between AALCO and the United Nations will continue to grow stronger. We cherish our association as a member of AALCO, which has been serving us as a forum for cooperation in the field of international law. We are optimistic that in the coming years, the organization will play a greater role in helping to consolidate the common interests of Asian and African States and that it will achieve its objectives of training and of disseminating international law expertise among Asian and African States, thereby strengthening their role in evolving a fair, equitable and universal legal order.

Mr. Ahmad (Bangladesh): I should like to convey my felicitations to the President of the General Assembly for the very smooth progress of the work of the fifty-seventh session of the Assembly thus far. We are confident that, through the joint efforts of the President, his Bureau, the Secretariat and delegations, the session will achieve the success that is desired.

We are here today to discuss the important issue of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations. As a multilateral international body, the United Nations has the unique distinction of being the largest and most representative of such bodies. Its vast scope of work, within the parameters set out by its Charter, is all-encompassing. In this work, the United Nations depends for direction, guidance and support on Member States and relies on its various organs for the implementation of decisions.

However, the very important role played in complementing those efforts by various international,

regional and other organizations which do not form part of the United Nations system may at times be overlooked. The draft resolutions under consideration today under the agenda item "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations" will definitely contribute significantly to overcoming such lapses. The need to strengthen cooperation between the various relevant international, regional and other organizations on the one hand and the United Nations and its organs and agencies on the other does not brook any debate. Such cooperation will help ensure the better coordination of the individual and cooperative efforts made by all those organizations and the United Nations in different fields.

I shall briefly say a few words about cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). Bangladesh welcomes the report of the Secretary-General on cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union, contained in document A/57/375. The report gives an excellent account of actions and contributions of parliamentarians, through the IPU, with respect to ongoing international efforts in promoting peace and security, sustainable development and human rights. The 107th IPU Conference, held in March 2002, made important contributions towards charting a course for the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. The activities of the IPU, in collaboration with various United Nations bodies, at the special session of the General Assembly on Children, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the World Food Summit, the sessions of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and the annual parliamentary hearings at the United Nations are only a few examples of the very useful work being carried out by the IPU.

Parliamentarians play a crucial role in their respective countries by formulating government policies and by legislating, as well as by supervising the implementation of policies and the enforcement of laws. One cannot overemphasize the importance of the role of legislators. Through their actions, they determine the policies of their respective nations on the issues of safeguarding peace and security, ensuring sustainable development and promoting human rights and the rule of law, both nationally and worldwide. The aggregate effect of their national efforts contributes to the direction that the world takes in fulfilling the goals and objectives of the United Nations.

Therefore, it is highly important that parliamentarians and legislators from countries around the world have an effective forum for exchange of views on all the important issues of the day. The IPU has been satisfactorily catering for this need over the years. Cooperation between the United Nations system and the Inter-Parliamentary Union thus assumes special significance. It enables parliamentarians from different countries to have a first-hand insight into the workings and activities of the United Nations and its various organs and agencies. It gives them an opportunity to understand issues from a global perspective, thus affording them the chance to compare the international demands and the actual national responses to them through policies and legislation. On the other hand, such cooperation also enables the United Nations and its organs and agencies to understand and appreciate the unique local and national situations, hopes and aspirations that limit and shape the actions of parliamentarians and legislators.

The United Nations and other international organizations often work on the basis of global and universal norms and standards, arrived at through negotiations synthesizing differing opinions into a broad consensus. Application of these norms and standards in the field in different national and local situations often requires adjustment and fine tuning, taking into account the peculiarities of individual situations. The pragmatic and realistic adjustment of priorities and the variation in interpretation and assessment often prove to be the key to success. This dilemma — the gap between broad policies and their actual implementation in local conditions — can be seen over a broad spectrum of issues. Strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and the IPU will go a long way in addressing this dilemma and reducing the gaps. We are happy that this cooperation has been further strengthened by granting the IPU observer status in the United Nations through yesterday's adoption by the Assembly of a resolution to that effect, resolution 57/32.

Bangladesh has a long tradition of pluralism and parliamentary democratic institutions. In spite of many pitfalls and occasional setbacks, the people of Bangladesh have always opted for a participatory form of democracy. We have a thriving Parliament, where legislators impose close supervision through parliamentary standing committees chaired by parliamentarians, not by members of the Cabinet.

Bangladeshi parliamentarians actively and regularly participate in the activities of the IPU. Members of Parliament from both the ruling and the opposition parties interact with their colleagues in other countries through regular exchange programmes. Bangladeshi parliamentarians have, on occasion, taken initiatives to organize their colleagues in the region for exchanges of views and to formulate common positions and programmes on various issues.

Bangladesh and its parliamentarians place particular importance on the ever-growing cooperation between the United Nations and the IPU. My delegation, therefore, has joined many others in sponsoring draft resolution A/57/L.38, on cooperation between the United Nations and the IPU.

Mr. Fall (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): The delegation of Senegal is particularly pleased we in the Assembly are revisiting, without bias or complacency, the already rich cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union (AU) which should now be furthered and expanded upon.

In fulfilling the noble mission entrusted to it in the Charter, the Organization has, since the adoption of resolution 1514 (XV) in 1960, always had, happily, close and fruitful ties with a continent which, now more than ever before, is aware that the Organization is truly close to it — that it feels its heartbeat, that it records its impulses and, in a word, that it heeds its most legitimate concerns. In timely fashion, these concerns revolve around the challenges and stakes of the new age in which we live, hallmarked by globalization, a strong and irrepressible reality which was in the minds of our leaders when, on 9 July 2002 in Durban, the AU was christened at the baptismal font, after having been launched at the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Summit, in Lomé on 10 July 2000, one year after the famous Summit held at Sirte.

These leaders thus identified the new paths for Africa, which converge on three parameters: combating terrorism, strengthening peace and promoting development. To achieve those goals, the support of the United Nations is indispensable.

I will first touch upon the fight against terrorism. The tragic events of 11 September 2001 were regrettable and terrible proof of the scope of the damage that the cruel and vile beast we know as terrorism is capable of committing. Africa, which has already paid the cost of this scourge, in particular with the deadly attacks that took place a few months prior to that in Kenya and in Tanzania, early on took the measure of this serious threat by initiating bold decisions.

At the initiative of the head of State of Senegal, the African anti-terrorism summit adopted the Dakar Declaration Against Terrorism on 17 October 2001. That important step was followed by the holding in Algiers on 11 to 14 September 2002 of the All High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism in Africa, which established an African agenda aimed at countering this scourge on African soil, on the basis of the OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, adopted at Algiers on 14 July 1999. Even more recently, other measures have been adopted to root out and eradicate elements and practices that constitute the backbone of terrorism. I should like to refer here to a few of the most significant examples.

In that connection, I would like to recall the 1994 Tunis Declaration on a Code of Conduct for Inter-African Relations; the 1996 Yaoundé Declaration and Plan of Action on Drug Control, Abuse and Illicit Drug Trafficking in Africa; the 1998 Dakar Declaration on the Prevention and Control of Transnational Crime and Corruption; and the 2000 Bamako Declaration on an African Common Position on the Illicit Proliferation, Circulation and Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons. These initiatives certainly reflect Africa's firm determination to play a more active role in the fight to eradicate terrorism. However, the success of those efforts depends on the active support and assistance of all partners and, in particular, of the United Nations, which has made peace its main priority.

I should now like to turn to the subject of strengthening peace. Senegal has always believed that recovery on the continent, and particularly economic recovery, will remain elusive so long as intra- and inter-State conflicts and tensions and their tragic human consequences persist. It is for that reason that my country is committed to participating as fully as possible by providing troops in the field and well-known Senegalese personalities to promote peace in such brotherly countries as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic, Sierra Leone and Madagascar. In the past we have made such contributions in Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Burundi and Rwanda. We may soon be doing the same in Côte

d'Ivoire and, again, in Liberia, as soon as conditions allow.

In order to strengthen the African Union's Peace and Security Council's capacity to intervene, the United Nations, along with the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Peer Review Mechanism, will be able to provide their assistance in facilitating the implementation of the African Council's early-warning system and the establishment of training programmes for military personnel and civilian police. They will also be able to extend consistent support to African countries actively involved in peacekeeping operations. In that connection, I would like to welcome the effective and positive presence of the United Nations in a number of African theatres of operation, as well as its fruitful cooperation with the African Union in the management of the conflicts tearing the continent apart.

In that regard, my delegation would like to welcome in particular the strong message sent by the Security Council to our development partners in order to mobilize the appropriate technical and financial aid to enable Guinea-Bissau and Sierra Leone to consolidate the gains made in establishing political and social normalcy in those two countries undergoing recovery.

With regard to nearby Liberia, we continue to await decisive support from the United Nations beyond the establishment of the International Contact Group on Liberia, which received its mandate on 17 September 2002 at a ministerial meeting held in New York, at the request of Senegal, current chair of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), whose Secretary-General was also present at that meeting. It is high time for a definitive ceasefire in Liberia, and for peace once and for all to be established in that devastated brotherly country. That would make possible the speedy deployment of an interposition force to that country, as well as the restoration of peace, security and development in Liberia.

The stability of the entire region depends upon that; a region where divisive elements have arisen in the sisterly Republic of Côte d'Ivoire. In that regard, my delegation welcomes the firm presidential statement of the Security Council — which reflects the particular attention the United Nations is giving to this matter — to send an African peacekeeping force to that country that has the trust of the parties and the valuable support of the United Nations and, in particular, of the Security Council. To that end, my delegation is hoping for a positive outcome of the negotiations that began at Lomé following the agreement on cessation of hostilities, concluded on 17 October under the auspices of Senegal.

I would also like to say how much we continue to appreciate the assistance of the United Nations, which has generously made considerable expertise available to Africa during the design phase preceding the establishment of the African Union's Peace and Security Council. My delegation hopes that this cooperation will be further strengthened once that new body is operational and prepared to assume its responsibilities in the areas of the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, in order to promote security on the continent, which is a sine qua non condition for economic and social development.

I would now like to turn to the subject of the promotion of African development. Drawing from the lessons learned during the repeated failures of the numerous programmes, strategies and other initiatives at African development that have often come from abroad, our leaders have finally resolved to design and adopt NEPAD in order to break once and for all the persistent chains of underdevelopment that have bound our peoples. Given its generous and collective spirit, this idea will make it possible for Africa to successfully become involved in today's globalized world and to participate actively in world trade through a considerable increase in direct foreign investment and a doubling of domestic investment.

In that connection, the delegation of Senegal welcomes the positive response of the United Nations. In his report entitled "Independent evaluation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s", the Secretary-General identified NEPAD as the ideal framework for a partnership between Africa and the rest of the world. That partnership is one in which the Organization will play a leading coordinating role. Our search for synergy in this regard will be entrusted to an adviser with special functions in Africa, who is yet to be named. Provided with the necessary resources to carry out his mission appropriately, the adviser's role should not be confined to bureaucratic tasks. Instead, the adviser should increasingly have other responsibilities in order to be able to play a dynamic, practical and proactive role on behalf of NEPAD. Senegal remains convinced that in

that exercise, as well as in other matters, the United Nations will support regional efforts to optimize results in the field through improved coordination of efforts and greater consistency in the programmes and activities carried out locally through the various bodies of the Secretariat.

In closing, I would like to say that, as described by Secretary-General Kofi Annan — whom I congratulate for the relevance of his report — cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union seems to be alive and well. We believe, however, that on closer observation, we can see that the important potential for cooperation and the enormous opportunities that cooperation provides have not been sufficiently explored. The structure of the Secretariat has not yet fully integrated the new elements represented by NEPAD and the Constitutive Act of the African Union.

Given the commendable work of the United Nations Liaison Office with the Organization of African Unity and the African Union at Addis Ababa, whose dynamism we welcome, as well as the opening of subregional offices in Dakar, Nairobi and, soon, elsewhere in Africa, Senegal has no doubt whatever that the pursuit of United Nations reform will fully meet our expectations. On that hopeful note, I would like to reiterate Senegal's gratitude for the irreplaceable activities of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and the Inter-Parliamentary Union and express the fervent desire that the United Nations and the African Union, together with those organizations, will work successfully to build a better world, a world in which the digital gap will be fully closed and the economy will be re-energized in a sustainable way, in which democracy and human rights will be solidly established, in which pandemics will be overcome and in which peace will be permanently established for the greater happiness of all people, even the most marginalized and vulnerable.

May the United Nations, the African Union and other organizations, in their daily common efforts to build peace, together forge an exemplary partnership for development. May they succeed in their efforts to cooperate.

Mr. Gross (Switzerland) *(spoke in French)*: It is an honour and pleasure for me to speak here as a member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and as a Swiss parliamentarian, one of the initiators of the referendum on Switzerland's joining the United Nations.

I am grateful on two counts. I would like to thank the Swiss Government for allowing me to speak without asking me to express its position. If you don't agree with some of my comments, please speak to me directly. Also, I would like to tell you how grateful I am to the people and cantons of the Swiss Confederation. As you know, we were one of the last States to become a Member of the United Nations. We were also one of the first to join as an entire people. The Swiss people took the decision to join at the urging of one of the minorities involved in offsetting the negative result of the first vote of 1986. This was further proof of the old adage that the Swiss may be against a new idea, but that does not mean that they are against the idea, it just means they are not yet in favour of the new idea.

You must remember that even in your countries things happen in the same way. If you take many people on a train for a long and uncertain trip, it takes time to fill up the train. But all the effort spent preparing the voyage is compensated by the greater legitimacy, durability and knowledge gained by everyone who was involved.

This effort was worthwhile for the future of Switzerland as well as the United Nations, because living as a democracy means mobilizing the creativity, wealth and the intellectual potential of a people together in pursuit of a greater common cause.

Today we are confronted with the challenge and obligation to design a structure that recognizes the value of democracy above and beyond the nation State, because the nation State alone can no longer address the transnational existential challenges facing its people, nor ensure respect for their human rights and social needs. We must remember that democracy is much more than simply organizing a parliamentary majority and legitimizing power. It is a precondition for all those who are not privileged to be able to express themselves, so that freedom is not limited to the wealthy and the privileged.

Consequently, today we must globalize democracy in order to humanize globalization. The United Nations will be at the forefront of this common undertaking and every region of the world may contribute to this effort through its experiences. The Council of Europe, a pan-European organization of 44

European countries, including the less privileged countries in Europe, is an example of how parliamentarians, chosen by their national parliaments, can become the engine for ensuring that such transnational organization can work. This is, perhaps, an experience that the United Nations might build upon. Based upon this experience, I ask you to support the resolution for the Inter-Parliamentary Union, which shares this perspective.

Such a parliamentary foundation that would reflect the hopes, experiences, ideas and needs of peoples, may seem a little disturbing or difficult for Governments and diplomats. But it is certainly essential in order to enhance the legitimacy, effectiveness and the capacity of the United Nations to resolve the existential problems of peoples in the true interests of the world.

Another experience of the Council of Europe that is worth consideration by other regional, transnational and United Nations organizations, is the authority it has created to protect human rights effectively for the benefit of each individual citizen, including those injured by their State. There are also some problems faced by both the Council of Europe and the United Nations and which should be reformed collectively. In particular, I am thinking of how these bodies are financed. The practices of the European Union might be helpful in this respect. But I am also thinking of the weaknesses of these organizations with regard to the power of the world economy and the injustice it creates worldwide.

I would like to remind you of what Jacques Delors suggested to the United Nations, namely that it should establish an economic security council that would respond to the world financial crisis and the impoverishment of some peoples, much as our Security Council responds to threats to peace and security.

I know these ideas might seem utopian to some of you, but I would like to remind you that each of the successes that we are proud of today, for example the United Nations, at one point also seemed rather utopian. If we want our children and grandchildren to be happy and proud of their political achievements, we must today be open and bold in looking at innovative ideas.

If today you are not brave enough to imagine that which is supposedly impossible, we will not be able to achieve tomorrow the possible and the necessary. We must avoid a clash of civilizations, if we seek to promote understanding.

I thank you for being open and courageous, and I would like to thank you also for having been patient enough to have listened to what may have been a rather unusual speech.

Mr. Koonjul (Mauritius): It gives me great pleasure to participate in this meeting of the General Assembly on agenda item 22, relating to cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations. My delegation attaches great importance to this item, as it is one of the many ways through which the United Nations institutionalizes its cooperation with regional and other organizations. Such cooperation leads to better understanding and helps in strengthening the roles and effectiveness of the United Nations and these organizations.

Let me express the great satisfaction of my delegation with the decision taken yesterday by the General Assembly to grant observer status to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, an organization that has been cooperating with the United Nations since 1947.

My delegation would like to thank the Secretary-General for the very comprehensive reports that he has submitted under this item. In our statement today, we would like to focus on United Nations cooperation with three organizations, namely the African Union, the International Organization of la Francophonie (OIF) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), of all of which Mauritius is a member. In this respect, my delegation associates itself with the statements made by the delegation of South Africa, on behalf of the African Union, the delegation of Lebanon, on behalf of the OIF and the delegation of Angola on behalf of SADC.

We note with satisfaction that during the year under review, cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) — now the African Union — has been further strengthened in several areas and has involved almost all the agencies of the United Nations system. We have noted in particular the close collaboration between the two organizations in the areas of conflict prevention and defusing tension in many parts of Africa, among others in Madagascar and the Comoros, two countries belonging to the same region as Mauritius.

With the transformation of the OAU into the African Union, the pan-African organization is currently in a transition phase and is in particular need of expertise and assistance to establish new structures and a foundation for the building of strong institutional capacities. We are pleased that the United Nations Development Programme is contributing strategically to the elaboration of a coherent framework for this transition and we hope that such assistance will continue on a longer-term basis when the Preparatory Assistance Programme ends in January 2003.

The good relations between the United Nations and the OAU have always been characterized by fruitful cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution. The prevention and resolution of conflict in Africa has always been a priority for the OAU and will remain so for the African Union in the coming years. With the establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, we hope that the assistance which was being provided to the Central Organ of the OAU will be maintained and further strengthened. As many members are aware, Africa has expressed its readiness to play a still greater role in conflict prevention and resolution by contributing African troops in the context of various conflict situations. These initiatives will require extensive support, and we invite the United Nations to help the African Union to build up its capacity in this regard.

In January this year, Mr. Amara Essy, Secretary-General of the OAU, participated in the public Security Council meeting on the situation in Africa, which led to the establishment of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa. That was the first time that the Secretary-General of the OAU had been invited to brief the Security Council on the issue of conflict relating to Africa. My delegation firmly believes that there is merit in maintaining this practice in the future. The Ad Hoc Working Group has identified several ways in which the African Union and the United Nations system could cooperate in order to address African issues.

The ownership of development policies through the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the economic programme of the African Union, bears testimony to the commitment and determination of Africa in addressing the political, economic and social, as well as the ecological, challenges of the continent. It is obvious, however, that the objectives of NEPAD cannot be realized without the assistance of international partners. The United Nations system could facilitate the process of building partnerships for Africa's development. We would like to reiterate that a United Nations system-wide coordinating framework will have to be developed to improve the effectiveness of United Nations support for NEPAD.

(*spoke in French*)

With regard to relations between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie, the report of the Secretary-General clearly indicates that, since the adoption of resolution 56/45, cooperation between the two entities has been further strengthened.

My delegation welcomes such cooperation between the United Nations and the OIF, which is based on complementarity and is mutually beneficial.

In the political domain, over and above OIF's contribution to conflict resolution in several African States, in particular Burundi and the Comoros, we welcome its decision to hold regular consultations and to exchange information and experiences in the field of preventive diplomacy and the restoration and consolidation of peace.

My delegation welcomes the OIF's contribution in the economic and social sphere, which has made it possible to include an Indian Ocean information management component in the Small Island Developing States Network. With a branch in Mauritius, that Network will now have a presence in the Indian Ocean, thereby facilitating a strengthening of information capacities in the service of sustainable development in such States.

We hope that cooperation between the United Nations and the OIF will be further pursued in other areas so as to promote sustained development in French-speaking countries.

(*spoke in English*)

Let me now turn to cooperation between the United Nations and SADC, a subregional organization to which Mauritius proudly belongs. Today, SADC is engaged not only in the consolidation and maintenance of democracy, peace and security, but also in efforts to promote sustainable development and regional

integration in a broad spectrum of economic and social areas.

A new wave of optimism is sweeping the SADC region, with real prospects for peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Angola. SADC as a region has cooperated fully with the United Nations in the area of peacekeeping activities, particularly in peace processes in the Great Lakes region. The signing of the Pretoria and Luanda Agreements demonstrate the commitment and will of the parties to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to turn the page and begin a new era of peace and reconstruction. We call on the United Nations to strengthen its presence and role in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and help in a thorough disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation or resettlement programme so that peace can be durable and sustainable.

In Angola, the signing of the Ceasefire Agreement in April created unprecedented conditions for the resolution of all pending questions relating to the Lusaka Protocol and its full implementation after more than three decades of war and conflict. With the end of the war, however, Angola has to face great humanitarian challenges. It is therefore vital that the international community continue to assist Angola by providing humanitarian financial and material assistance in alleviating the suffering of the Angolan people and reintegrating UNITA in all spheres of activities in the country. The United Nations, together with SADC, should play an important coordinating role.

With the progress achieved in the peace processes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Angola, the focus should now be on how to have an effective demobilization and reintegration programme for lasting peace in those two countries and in the region as a whole. My delegation favours a global approach to deal with the problem of demobilization and reintegration, and we believe that subregional organizations such as SADC can play a significant role in coordinating such programmes.

It is also encouraging to note that in its quest for peace and stability in the SADC region, there is close ongoing consultation between the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs and SADC to identify opportunities for further cooperation in addressing the problems of small arms and light weapons and the elimination of landmines.

The SADC community is determined to continue with its ultimate objective of building a region in which there will be a high degree of harmonization and rationalization. This will enable a pooling of resources aimed at achieving collective self-reliance in order to improve the living standards of the people of the region. SADC is also encouraging its member States to incorporate a gender perspective at various decision-making levels. Unfortunately, these efforts are being hampered by the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases, as well as by the recent adverse weather conditions, which have taken a heavy toll on the food situation in a large number of SADC countries. While the Secretary-General's reports highlight the close cooperation which exists between the United Nations and SADC in addressing these issues, we appeal to the international community to increase its assistance to SADC members, especially those which are particularly affected by HIV/AIDS and the current food shortages.

In conclusion, the delegation of Mauritius fully supports the draft resolutions aimed at strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations.

Mr. Zhang Yishan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): At the outset, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report on cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO). We are pleased to see the two organizations strengthening their relationship and expanding their areas of cooperation.

AALCO is the only intergovernmental legal consultative organization for the Asian and African region. Since its establishment, it has dedicated itself to the following areas: consultation and coordination on legal matters among member States; the latest developments in international law; and legal questions of common concern to Asian and African countries. It has achieved positive results. Over the years, AALCO has served as a forum of cooperation for countries of the region to work on legal issues and other matters of common concern. Moreover, it has contributed to the progressive development of international law and to its codification.

AALCO has become a regional body with unique influence in the legal field. We believe that that influence will continue to grow.

Since its accreditation as an observer in the General Assembly, AALCO has enjoyed ever-closer cooperation with the United Nations. Relevant United Nations agencies such as the International Law Commission (ILC), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) are regularly represented at AALCO's annual sessions, and their representatives regularly deliver important speeches.

Likewise, AALCO also attends a variety of meetings in the United Nations system and participates actively by making useful contributions. From the outset, it has given priority consideration to legal and other matters of concern to the United Nations. In this regard, its cooperation with the ILC stands out. Besides inviting ILC representatives to participate in its annual sessions and to speak of the work of the ILC, it has also made the report on the work of the ILC a regular item on its agenda, under which discussions are held and suggestions made. The Secretary General of AALCO also attends each session of the ILC and introduces the work of the organization. The cooperation between the two organizations is fruitful and satisfactory.

Last July, the forty-first annual session of AALCO was held in Abuja, Nigeria. During the session, detailed discussions were held on many important issues, including the work of the ILC, the establishment of the International Criminal Court, the campaign against corruption, the law of the sea, protection of the environment, human rights, refugees, and counter-terrorism. This has enabled the members to achieve mutual understanding and engage in cooperation on those issues.

China, a member of both the United Nations and AALCO, attaches great importance to AALCO and has actively participated in and strongly supported its work since becoming a fully fledged member in 1983. China is pleased to see the ever-closer and extensive cooperation between the United Nations and AALCO. We hope that the two organizations will further strengthen their cooperation in the promotion of the progressive development and codification of international law and other areas of common concern. This will set a good example of a close relationship and effective cooperation between a global international organization and a regional international one in their common quest for world peace and development. The Chinese Government will continue to contribute to the strengthening of AALCO's role and influence, as well as to the close cooperation between the United Nations and AALCO.

Mr. Aboul Gheit (Egypt), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Mr. Santa Clara Gomes (Portugal): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Portuguese Foreign Minister, Antonio Martins da Cruz, Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), who wished to address this plenary on the item "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe".

We view this debate, which is taking place shortly before the OSCE Ministerial Council, to be held in Porto on 6 and 7 December, as a very important political message that makes clear the importance that the United Nations attaches to the role and the contribution of the OSCE in the consolidation of peace and stability in its regional area of intervention.

The guiding objective of the tenure of the Portuguese chairmanship has been to ensure that the OSCE maintains its important role in the international arena, both in its vocational area of preventive diplomacy and in the new tasks resulting from the ever-changing international security context.

The prevention of, and the fight against, terrorism has been a central priority of our chairmanship, with the objective of promoting the valuable contribution of the OSCE, namely through the Bucharest Plan of Action and the Bishkek Programme of Action, in the context of the international strategy led by the United Nations.

It is in this context that we organized in Lisbon, on 12 June, the first Conference of Secretaries-General and High Representatives of the main international and regional organizations involved in the fight against terrorism. We hope to see a follow-up to this Conference next year, and we have already offered to host such a meeting in Portugal.

We have also been working towards the elaboration of an OSCE Charter for the Prevention and

the Fight against Terrorism. This political document, which we hope to see adopted at the Porto Ministerial meeting, will reaffirm the core, lasting and timeless values and norms guiding OSCE action.

Another concrete example of the OSCE's vitality will be the adoption in Porto of a decision containing clear guidelines for the elaboration of an OSCE strategy to address threats to security and stability in the twenty-first century. This strategy will not only allow the identification of a list of threats and challenges but also make it possible to elaborate a new operational approach for the OSCE to address such risks. We are all aware of the new difficulties and threats facing our individual and collective security, but no organization is capable of tackling them on its own. The reinforcement of the cooperation and coordination between all international and regional organizations has particular relevance in our globalized world where the concept of indivisible security is more palpable than ever to our citizens.

It is in this spirit that the Portuguese Chairmanship of the OSCE has been promoting the operational concept of the Platform for Cooperative Security, adopted at the OSCE Istanbul Summit in 1999, with a view to developing modalities of dialogue and collaboration between the OSCE and other international organizations, both at the headquarters level and on the ground.

As a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, the OSCE has been able to develop, over the years, a very close and fruitful partnership with the United Nations in a number of key security related areas.

Conflict prevention appears at the forefront of the common efforts undertaken by both organizations. The prevention of conflicts is a core component of the OSCE's activities and a very important field within which to foster cooperation among international and regional organizations. We need indeed to promote a common culture of prevention, following up the dialogue on peace-building initiated by Secretary-General Kofi Annan. In this context, we welcome the initiative of the Regional European Union Conference on Conflict Prevention, which took place last August in Helsingborg and where Minister Martins da Cruz participated as OSCE Chairman-in-Office.

The OSCE's continued relevance is not only due to its broad membership, as the only political forum that is simultaneously Pan-European, Euro-Atlantic and Euro-Asiatic, but also to its unique and comprehensive concept of security, based on three dimensions: human, political-military and economic-environmental. It is in the framework of these dimensions that the OSCE and the United Nations have been working together in concrete and pragmatic terms. Concerning the human dimension, the Portuguese Chairmanship would like to praise the active participation of a number of high-level representatives from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (UNDCCP) in the Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting which took place in Warsaw last September. This meeting paved the way for the preparation of relevant documents for the Porto Ministerial Council Meeting on trafficking in human beings, tolerance and electoral standards. We would also like to underline the close cooperation and exchange of information between the OSCE and UNHCR regarding refugees and statelessness.

In the economic and environmental dimension, the Portuguese Chairmanship would like to thank UNESCO, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and the United Nations Environment Programme for their valuable support during this year's OSCE Economic Forum, which took place in Prague in May, on the theme of cooperation for the sustainable use and the protection of the quality of water. We hope that the recommendations which were adopted will contribute to the efforts of the United Nations in making the 21st century one of "water peace".

In the political-military dimension, continued efforts have been undertaken by the OSCE in the field of small arms and light weapons. This is an important area of complementarity and synergy between the United Nations and the OSCE. We would are also considering the possibility this year for the OSCE to participate in or carry out peacekeeping operations. This needs to be pursued in close consultation with the United Nations.

Turning now to cooperation on the ground, we have witnessed, in different regions throughout this year, the continuous development of mutually reinforcing efforts between the United Nations and the OSCE. In South-Eastern Europe, this cooperation is

solid and provides concrete results. Throughout the region, the OSCE and the United Nations mutually support their daily activities in the field.

In Kosovo, where this cooperation is more evident at an a institutional level, both organizations work together in the implementation of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999). The OSCE has proven to be an essential part of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo, where it has played a substantial role in preparing and organizing elections. The recent municipal poll is a good example of how the OSCE continues to consolidate stability in the province and to gradually hand over autonomy. The OSCE also remains committed in training a multi-ethnic police service, building democratic institutions and promoting human rights.

In Moldova, some important developments took place this year in the political process. Negotiations between the two parties and the three mediators resumed after a long period of inaction. The parties agreed to discuss a proposal presented by the mediators on the future political role of Trans-Dniester, in what represents a step ahead towards a solution to this conflict. On the fulfilment of the Istanbul commitments by the Russian Federation, some progress was achieved and we look forward to the completion of this process.

Regarding Belarus, the relationship of the OSCE with this country has been at the centre of discussions during the current year, especially through the role of the field mission in Minsk. The OSCE Chair has engaged in serious consultations with the Government of Belarus, with a view to solving the current deadlock as soon as possible, and discussions are currently under way in Vienna.

In Georgia, OSCE activities are particularly challenging. With regard to the South Ossetian negotiating process, the Portuguese Chairmanship hosted in Castelo Branco, last October, the eighth meeting of the experts group on political issues. The protocol that was signed represents a positive step in the resolution of this conflict in the Caucasus, ensuring the continuity of the momentum of the process.

Concerning Abkhazia, the OSCE Chair followed with the utmost attention the development of events and supported the efforts of the United Nations in the peace process.

Regarding Central Asia, the Portuguese Chairmanship praises the efforts undertaken by the OSCE and the United Nations to strengthen their cooperation. We would like in particular to emphasize the good collaboration between the OSCE Missions in Central Asia, particularly in Tajikistan, with certain United Nations agencies such as the UNDCCP in combating drug trafficking and the UNHCR in dealing with the increasing problem of refugees. I would also like to stress the excellent cooperation between the OSCE and the ECE, which have worked together under many projects of the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia.

Let me conclude by reaffirming the conviction of the Portuguese Chairmanship of the OSCE that the current General Assembly debate will lead to the adoption of the annual resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the OSCE, which will be taking into account, where need be, the outcome of the Porto Ministerial Council Meeting. The Portuguese Permanent Mission intends to begin consultations and discussions on the draft resolutions during the coming week in New York. We count on the support of all delegations in this endeavour.

Mr. Enkhsaikhan (Mongolia): At the outset, I wish to join previous speakers in expressing my delegation's appreciation to the Secretary-General for the preparation of the reports on the agenda item under consideration.

Mongolia attaches great importance to cooperation between the United Nations and other international organizations. The relevance of regional organizations in strengthening international peace and security, in conflict prevention and in promoting mutual understanding and cooperation and so on is undeniable, as such organizations are uniquely placed to deal with region-specific issues and problems by providing the necessary expertise to complement the expertise of the United Nations. The reports of the Secretary-General demonstrate that the United Nations continues to make considerable progress in deepening and expanding its relations with regional and other international organizations on a mutually beneficial basis.

Bearing in mind the time factor, and the fact that many delegations have already spoken at length on United Nations cooperation with other organizations, I shall focus on the Organization's cooperation with two organizations, namely, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO).

My delegation is pleased to note that the Secretary-General's report on cooperation between United Nations and the IPU (A/57/375) is broad-ranging and substantive. I share the view expressed by the Secretary-General that the parliamentary voice, which is the voice of the people, must be an integral component of the work of the United Nations. Although these two bodies have organizational and structural differences, the relevant report demonstrates that they are able to cooperate fruitfully. The Secretary-General's report deals with the contribution of parliaments to major United Nations events, including to multilateral negotiations, the special session of the General Assembly on children, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Commission on Human Rights and so on. It covers almost every area of United Nations activities.

Cooperation between the United Nations and the IPU began as far back as 1947. That cooperation was further developed with the signing of the cooperation agreement, in 1996. The inclusion of the issue of cooperation between the two organizations as an item for consideration at General Assembly sessions since 2001 is a demonstration of the collaborative spirit of both the United Nations and the IPU.

As evidenced by the report, the two organizations share common goals, agendas and concerns, namely strengthening international peace and security, ensuring support for human rights, encouraging and supporting democratic changes, promoting sustainable development, reducing poverty and ensuring social progress. We concur with the view that parliaments and the IPU can serve as a bridge between the global and the local.

While addressing the question of cooperation, we need to focus on the comparative advantages of the two organizations and on a rational division of labour. The IPU could therefore serve to raise parliamentary awareness and to promote support for the work of the United Nations in national parliaments, thereby helping Governments. One other area of fruitful cooperation could be the conduct of genuinely democratic elections. Another important area lies in promoting democracy and strengthening human rights, representative democratic institutions and the rule of law. For example, the IPU has agreed to make its contribution to the Fifth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies, which is scheduled to be held Mongolia in June of next year. The main theme of the conference will be to promote good governance and strengthen the role of civil society.

As the legislative bodies of States, parliaments can play an important role in strengthening international law, especially by promoting its progressive codification and speedily ratifying and universalizing basic international treaties — including those dealing with human rights, terrorism, arms control and environmental protection — and, equally important, by ensuring their full implementation.

We welcome the input of the IPU with regard to the successful holding of the Millennium Summit through the contribution of the first-ever Conference of Presiding Officers of National Parliaments. We also expect the IPU and national parliaments to be instrumental in achieving the Millennium Development Goals in the agreed time frame.

Mongolia is proud to serve on the executive body of the IPU. Bearing in mind the constructive role that the IPU can play in promoting the goals of the United Nations, my delegation has joined in sponsoring draft resolution A/57/L.38, which is before the Assembly. We support the recommendation that the IPU be given both a standing invitation to observe the work of the United Nations and the right to circulate documents in the General Assembly.

Turning to AALCO, my delegation would like to express its satisfaction with the growing cooperation of that body with the United Nations since 1980. Through its programmes, AALCO is very effectively contributing to strengthening the role of the United Nations and its various organs, including the International Court of Justice. The Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization continues to orient its work programme towards priority areas of the United Nations, for which my delegation is grateful.

AALCO has left its imprint on the largest progressive codification process of the past century: the codification of the law of the sea. That fact will next month enable us to mark the twentieth anniversary of the signing of the Montego Bay Convention, which regulates almost two thirds of the Earth's surface. Since the Convention's entry into force, AALCO has been closely monitoring the work and functioning of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea and the International Seabed Authority.

In the 1990s, AALCO actively participated in the programmes of the United Nations Decade of International Law, in programmes on the environment and sustainable development and in helping delegations to prepare for negotiations on the establishment of the International Criminal Court. Bearing in mind that many States have still not yet ratified or acceded to the Rome Statute, my delegation believes that AALCO could play an important supporting role in the efforts to speed up ratification processes, perhaps by focusing on areas of possible concern to States and producing its well-known notes and comments. Likewise, it could be instrumental in promoting the objectives and principles set out in the Millennium Declaration by promoting wider acceptance of multilateral treaties deposited with the Secretary-General.

Apart from the field of international law, my delegation would like to commend the fact that the AALCO is also active, among other things, in the fields of international economic cooperation, the fight against corruption, the environment, refugees, the protection of migrant workers and the promotion of human rights. We wish AALCO further success in promoting the goals of the United Nations. It is for that reason that Mongolia has become a sponsor of draft resolution A/57/L.18.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to express the hope that the United Nations will further deepen and expand its mutually beneficial cooperation with other international organizations. We hope that its cooperation with regional organizations will soon be expanded to include the Regional Forum of the Association of South-East Asian Nations, and that cooperation with international legal bodies will include the International Criminal Court.

Ms. Pulido Santana (Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): This intervention in the debate will focus on agenda item 22 (h), on cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU).

The delegation of Venezuela would like to express its satisfaction that the item on cooperation between the United Nations and the IPU was included on the agendas of the Sixth Committee and the General Assembly, because of the great significance that our country attributes to the work of parliamentarians as representatives of the popular will and to their positive influence on international relations.

Venezuela's support for the work of parliamentarians is reaffirmed by the inclusion of members of our legislative body as members in Venezuelan delegations. On this occasion, we are pleased to highlight the presence of Venezuelan parliamentarians — including the President of the Andean Parliament, Deputy Jhannette Madriz Sotillo, and the Secretary-General of the Latin American Parliament, Deputy Rafael Correa Flores — to consider this item in plenary meeting. Our delegation believes that Venezuelan parliamentarians impart a special dynamic to the consideration of many of the items on the Assembly's agenda, which in turn enables us to focus on those multilateral issues in a more integral way.

In addition, I should like to highlight as relevant the fact that, of the five Associate Members of the IPU, three are parliamentary organizations belonging to the Latin American region: the Latin American Parliament, the Andean Parliament and the Central American Parliament. The participation of those organizations in the IPU attests to its importance for our region and to the contribution of regional and subregional parliamentarians to the fulfilment of its purposes, especially the attainment of international peace and stability.

In this era of change, both in the international system and in the United Nations, new actors must be involved in order to make development and the results of peace and international cooperation more effective. The valuable contributions that the IPU has made and continues to make in that area, particularly in fostering peace and democracy, are undeniable. In that regard, we thank the Secretary-General for submitting his report, contained in document A/57/375, in which he describes the broad cooperation between the IPU and the United Nations over the past year. The report highlights the contribution of the parliamentary dimension to United Nations activities, especially in conflict prevention.

Undoubtedly, parliamentary diplomacy has contributed and continues to contribute to the prevention and the peaceful settlement of disputes, by virtue of the positive impact of the international measures, contacts and relations that, because of their flexible nature, can be carried out by Parliaments. Similarly, the compliance of States with the norms of international law is strengthened through the IPU's valuable support for the United Nations by ensuring, through national Parliaments, the conformity of

national legal decisions with the international legal framework.

By expressing the popular will, elected parliamentarians also echo the international will of their peoples. In addition, they promote the fulfilment of the rights and freedoms of peoples, contribute to the attainment of peace and stability, and provide monitoring and follow-up with regard to intergovernmental actions of interest to countries' foreign policies.

As we pointed out during the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly and less than two months ago during the Sixth Committee debate on this item, Venezuela believes that the relations between the Organization and the IPU must be duly strengthened and formalized. Therefore, we are pleased to join the consensus on the adoption of the draft resolution in the Committee and in the General Assembly. In addition, we welcome the consensus reached on the distribution of official United Nations documents without financial implications for the Organization. We also support the draft resolution in the hope that it will be adopted by consensus in the Assembly.

Mr. Fonseca (Brazil) (*spoke in Spanish*): The debate on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations is always a special opportunity to explore synergies among international organizations, to share experiences and thus to strengthen practices that encourage greater understanding among peoples. In that regard, I should like to cite the example provided by cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), which, since its establishment more than 100 years ago, has promoted dialogue among parliaments of various nations.

The delegation of Brazil welcomes the decision by Member States to grant General Assembly observer status to the Union. That distinction recognizes not only the institution's unique nature, but also its historic activities to bring national Parliaments and the United Nations — which is the world Parliament — closer together. The entity's new status is also an effective stimulus for closer cooperation between the United Nations and the IPU, as expressed in resolution 54/12, which recognizes the potential of collaboration between the two bodies, and in the report of the Secretary-General on this item (A/57/375).

Cooperation of the United Nations and its subsidiary organs with the IPU can be brought about in two ways: through the Union's active participation in United Nations debates and through the dissemination of the international agenda at the domestic level. In that way, the parliamentary component of States will take an active part in debates on today's great issues. In addition, the Union's contribution will enhance understanding of the items on the United Nations agenda and will enable parliamentarians to assess the various aspects of the Organization's work. In Brazil's case, for many years now, parliamentarians have been involved in the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and we are happy to see that, increasingly, debates in the General Assembly and those in our parliaments are in tune with one another.

The second way in which the Inter-Parliamentary Union can cooperate with the United Nations is with respect to the dissemination among our national parliaments of information on major issues on the international agenda. This promotes the communication of the outcome of deliberations in the General Assembly, and its implementation at the national level. Often, parliaments have the task of transforming United Nations decisions into national policies. In that context, I would like to welcome the decision of the 107th Conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, held in Marrakech, Morocco, in March this year, which It stressed the importance of national parliaments in monitoring and implementing decisions taken by multilateral organizations.

Brazil expresses its support for efforts to strengthen cooperation between the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the United Nations, such as those proposed in the Secretary-General's report. I am confident that granting observer status to the Inter-Parliamentary Union will make the work of that organization even more productive and effective and will contribute overall to invigorating its pursuit of its objectives and of the purposes of the Charter of the United Nations.

Mr. Laoteggueinodji (Chad) (*spoke in French*): My delegation associates itself with the statement made on behalf of the members of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Congo. We trust that draft resolution A/57/L.25, on cooperation between ECCAS and the United Nations, will be adopted by consensus.

However, allow me to mention some aspects of international cooperation and regional cooperation that, in the view of my delegation, are very important. Given its geographical location, my country, Chad, is at the heart of African cultures and civilizations and is thus called upon to participate in cooperation at the international, regional and subregional levels. My delegation therefore truly appreciates the Secretary-General's initiative of holding a wide-ranging debate on cooperation between the United Nations and various regional-cooperation organizations. And it could not be otherwise, as the United Nations is the keystone of all cooperation among its Member States.

Cooperation is a major focus of my Government's policies. Stressing that political will, my country's authorities took the decision to make the Ministry for Foreign Affairs the ministry responsible for African cooperation policy. The result is the newly-named Ministry for Foreign Affairs and African Integration. This desire for cooperation has led our country to join many regional organizations, some of whose headquarters are located in Chad.

I welcome the fact that my country is a member of many of the organizations for cooperation mentioned in the Secretary-General's reports. My delegation therefore hopes that United Nations cooperation with the African Union will have a positive impact on other multisectoral organizations for economic integration, such as ECCAS, the Economic Community of West African States, the Arab Maghreb Union, the Community of Sahelo-Saharan States and the Southern Africa Development Community. Those organizations are the pillars of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and must establish links of cooperation among themselves, with the assistance of the United Nations.

In short, we have to create horizontal ties of intra-African cooperation and vertical ties of cooperation between African regional organizations and those bringing together other developing countries, especially those in the Americas and Asia. Is not Africa present on those continents? Today, Africa is a like a broken vessel, and it needs the help of all its children past and present to tend its many wounds.

Today's debate is therefore very useful. It must also become more focused, targeting those areas of cooperation that are most promising and which can be mechanisms to help us combat poverty. Where exactly is poverty? It is very real in the countries of the southern hemisphere. That is why, while commending North-South cooperation, which must continue to be strengthened, my delegation believes that South-South cooperation must also be encouraged and further strengthened. There is a folk saying that two poor people do not make a rich person. But the two poor people can certainly think together about the conditions of their poverty and seek ways to escape it.

The structures of the economies of the countries of the South are comparable in many respects. Those countries possess experience and technology adapted to their development situation. In that context, my country notes with satisfaction that it is thanks to a country of the South, a member of Association of South-East Asian Nations, that we have been able to finalize our petroleum project, which is currently under construction.

It is a paradox that the countries of the South are poor, as they have an enormous reserve of raw materials and human resources to offer in their relationships of cooperation with countries of the North. Can countries of the South not do the same in their relations with other countries of the South? That is the question I ask.

Mr. Sriwidjaja (Indonesia): It is with pleasure that my delegation is participating in the current deliberations of the General Assembly on agenda item 22, "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations". We have witnessed the intensification of the cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations that began several years ago, and which has continued to develop. Better prospects have emerged for substantive progress towards solutions to many regional problems long considered to be intractable. In that context, fruitful cooperation has been established between the United Nations and regional organizations which have acted as partners in facilitating the peaceful resolution of numerous conflicts.

Regional organizations can play an increasingly active role in resolving disputes, as they have the greatest stake in their peaceful settlement. For geographical, historical and other reasons, they are uniquely placed to propose solutions to local conflicts. They understand their complexities and can mediate impartially. Their involvement can also lead to greater participation in the international system.

The partnership between the United Nations system and regional organizations should grow closer in the years to come, especially in the areas of working for peace, the rule of law, human rights, education, socio-economic development and the transfer of new information and communication technologies. We believe that further studies should be undertaken on the modalities for cooperation in these and other areas, within the framework of Chapter VIII of the Charter and in the emerging context of inter-multilateralism.

Let me now turn my attention to some specific aspects of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations.

My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Cambodia on behalf of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN). In that regard, we express our support for the draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and ASEAN (A/57/L.16). It is our hope that it will be adopted by consensus.

Likewise, Indonesia attaches special importance to cooperation between the United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum. That importance is derived in part from our active participation in the Forum as a post-Forum dialogue partner. We fully support that cooperation, and we are pleased to be among the sponsors of the draft resolution on this matter (A/57/L.21).

As regards cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), we endorse the decision (resolution 57/32) taken on the recommendation of the Sixth Committee to accord observer status to the IPU. We are a sponsor of the draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the IPU (A/57/L.38). In our view, that decision marks an important landmark in the growing relationship between the United Nations and the IPU. It will facilitate the task of the two organizations to seek collective solutions to emerging problems facing the international community and to creating a better world for all of humankind on the basis of the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

As far as cooperation between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) is concerned, our delegation is particularly encouraged by the momentum that has developed in building the global infrastructure for verification, which is an important component of the Treaty in ensuring compliance with its provisions prohibiting nuclear tests in the atmosphere, underground and under water. That regime is also expected to bring scientific and technical benefits to developing countries.

The level and pace of signatures and ratifications of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) epitomize the international community's strong support for the Treaty. Although the Treaty has not come into force since it was opened for signature six years ago, it is nonetheless heartening to witness the increasing number of ratifying countries, which now stands at 97. We realize the importance of continuing efforts towards the early ratification of the CTBT and of reaffirming the confidence of States in the Treaty, which is a major instrument for non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. The 2001 Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Treaty encouraged the Preparatory Commission and the Secretary-General to support mutual efforts to seek further adherence by the States concerned.

Aware both of our responsibility as a country listed in annex 2 of the Treaty and of the importance of sustained progress towards ratification, Indonesia will continue to make concerted efforts to expedite the process of ratification, which is still under way. Indonesia is among the countries that lack the technological wherewithal to monitor nuclear tests or to verify the Treaty's implementation. We have therefore placed our confidence in the integrity and reliability of the future CTBTO as a multilateral mechanism to ensure compliance with the Treaty's provisions. Indonesia also supports the initiative being coordinated by Mexico to convene the Third Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT in 2003, so as to maintain the momentum in building the verification regime and to safeguard the objectives of the Treaty. We are hopeful that the Conference will include high-level attendance by States that have signed or ratified the Treaty.

We wish to encourage further outreach activities by the Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission through diplomacy, as well as other endeavours to maintain and secure additional support in establishing a global verification regime.

We would also like to welcome the Joint Ministerial Statement in support of the CTBT that was adopted during this session of the General Assembly, on 14 September 2002, and that has been endorsed by

50 Foreign Ministers (*see A/57/586*). In our view, the content and spirit of that statement will add impetus to the international norm against nuclear testing, and thereby to the cause of non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

Before I conclude my statement, let me express the hope that, pending the coming into force of the Treaty, the interaction between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission, as embodied in the agreement signed in 2000, will continue to grow. Such interaction and coordination can be sustained in areas of common interest and should develop fruitfully to the mutual benefit of both the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission. In that way, the Commission can profit from experience and insights derived from the United Nations. That, in turn, will contribute to the work of the Commission. Indonesia looks forward to the strengthening of cooperation between the two organizations, and to working jointly towards the common objective of achieving a comprehensive and verifiable ban on nuclear testing for all time and in all environments.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right to reply.

Mr. Shacham (Israel): I must, regrettably, ask the indulgence of the General Assembly in order to respond to comments made earlier this afternoon by the representative of Egypt.

It is unfortunate that in the discussion of an issue dear to us all — cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations — the delegation of Egypt found it necessary to voice an extraneous and irrelevant attack against my country. That behaviour is even more puzzling in the light of the fact that today, throughout Israel, ceremonies and events are being held to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the late Egyptian President Sadat's courageous visit to our country and the launching of negotiations that led to the first peace treaty between Israel and an Arab State.

It is hard to think of an agenda item more dedicated to multilateralism than the item under consideration, which praises cooperation over divisiveness. Why, then, did it become imperative for the Egyptian speaker to single out Israel for a scathing, and even inaccurate, politically motivated sideswipe? That, unfortunately, is far from an uncommon occurrence. Time and again, in the plenary General Assembly and in the Assembly's various committees, Egyptian speakers have singled out Israel for attack and denigration in statements on universal agenda items that have nothing to do with the Middle East.

My delegation could have also taken the floor in order, perhaps, to call upon the world's parliamentarians to join together in protest over the lack of legislative power of the rubber-stamp Egyptian Parliament, or perhaps to protest the authoritarian regime in Egypt, which consistently violates the human rights of religious and ethnic minorities, homosexuals and women. But we chose not to do so.

Seeing the attitude of Egypt's representatives at the United Nations and that of its Government at home, the people of Israel ask themselves, "Where is the peace?" We were promised land for peace, so we withdrew from the entire Sinai peninsula. And yet, we received only hatred and animosity. We were promised land for peace, so we offered far-reaching withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza. Yet, we received in return a ruthless campaign of terrorism that has left nearly 700 Israelis dead and thousands wounded.

While Israel appreciates the fact that peace officially exists between us, I ask my Egyptian colleagues to consider how this kind of behaviour influences the Israeli people, who nurture the hopes and promises of peace, yet see that in return for comprehensive concessions they get only rejection, hatred and violence.

Mr. Atta (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): We are surprised at the comments of the representative of Israel. We merely cited irrefutable facts about the daily experiences of those living in the occupied territories. A policy of closures, imposed by the Israeli occupying forces, has been in force for the past two years. Furthermore, a travel ban is in operation every day that prevents Palestinian parliamentarians from moving about within the Palestinian territory. Israel's policy of destroying Palestinian civil institutions is another fact.

Finally, the representative of Israel referred to true democracy. A true democracy does not occupy the territory or usurp the rights of others, as Israel has been doing for half a century. The Israeli representative should be ashamed that the Israeli State is the only State in the twenty-first century that is engaged in military occupation of another people's territory.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.